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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 14, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM LATHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Monsignor Edward F. Jordan, Pastor, St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Austin, Texas, offered the following prayer:

O God, we ask Your guidance for the men and women who serve their country in this House of government. Give them the wisdom to understand what is truly good for the citizens who have elected them, and the courage to frame the best possible laws to achieve this good.

Bless and protect their families and friends who have shared with them the challenging tasks of seeking public office and serving their Nation before the gaze of all.

On this day, when we honor the flag, the symbol of our Nation, keep us mindful of those men and women who have given their lives in war and in peace that we may enjoy laws that support our liberty.

Furthermore, we seek Your guidance for all the citizens of this Nation as they offer their chosen representatives both enthusiastic support and civil opposition in their honorable work of governing. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. INSLEE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

HONORING MONSIGNOR EDWARD JORDAN

(Mr. McCAUL of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McCAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great man, a man of God, a man of faith, a man who has devoted his entire career, indeed his entire life, to the service of his fellow man.

Monsignor Edward Jordan, who offered this morning's prayer for the House of Representatives is revered, admired, and loved by all in his congregation and by all those whose life he has touched. He is the voice and shepherd of our parish at St. John Neumann's Catholic Church in Austin, Texas.

Born in Springfield, Ohio, Monsignor Jordan entered the priesthood after receiving his doctorate in theology from the Angelicum University in Rome. From there he served and strengthened the Catholic Church and its flock in central Texas for over four decades.

It has been a great privilege to call Monsignor Jordan my pastor. And ev-

eryone who knows him experiences the true message of Christ. In his words and in his deeds, and above all, in his heart, his example is a beacon of light which draws us all closer to the Creator. His faith and devotion to the life of Christ is an inspiration to us all.

Both as a candidate and as a Member of Congress, Monsignor Jordan gave me the spiritual guidance and taught me the true meaning of sacrifice and public service. He baptized my triplets, not an easy accomplishment, and he administered the Sacrament of Holy Communion to my oldest daughters.

And while his retirement this Sunday marks the end of one spiritual journey, it also marks the beginning of another.

As you move on from your official role within the Church, you will always remain our shepherd, our spiritual leader, and, above all, our friend. Monsignor Jordan, I know that I speak for all of us in the Catholic community when I say that we will miss you, but we know that you will always be there for your flock.

I am reminded of the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." May the peace of Christ be with you and may He hold you in the palm of his hand.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 one-minute speeches on each side.

FEMA IS "THE" DISASTER

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, when hurricane disaster hit Louisiana and Texas, many people suffered, and many people profited on this misfortune. To the rescue was FEMA. But the phrase itself

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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brings fear and trepidation into the hearts and souls of those affected by this disaster.

Why? Many people that needed help never got it and never will. But some people did get help, and they profited on this disaster, and FEMA paid for it. The GAO says FEMA wasted \$1.6 billion of taxpayer money, or 16 percent of all funding.

Thieves used unlawful money to get season football tickets, vacation at Hawaiian resorts for 2½ months, paid for a divorce lawyer, go to topless clubs, and, get this, even pay for a sex change operation. FEMA even sent money to prison inmates pretending to be hurricane victims.

Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be. FEMA should only be responsible for passing out toothbrushes to these thieves, because that is all they will need when they go to prison. If employees at FEMA are accomplices they should go to jail too. Hurricane season is back. But do not expect FEMA to help in the next disaster, they are the disaster.

And that's just the way it is.

IMAGE OF THE UNITED STATES

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, a respected opinion poll, just released, shows that the image of the United States has been seriously damaged around the world as we attacked and occupied Iraq.

The U.S. war against Iraq as seen worldwide is a threat to world peace. The poet Robert Burns once wrote, "Oh, would some power God give us to see ourselves as others see us." Because the world is interconnected and interdependent, it would be helpful for us to see why the people of other nations, especially those who have been our friends, not only oppose our actions in Iraq but also question the so-called war on terror.

We have lost so much for a war based on lies. Right after 9/11, many asked, why do "they" hate us? That was the time to begin reaching out to unite the world in our common aspiration for safety and security. Not through war and occupation, but through truth and reconciliation.

The human unity which we celebrate as a Nation under God should remind us that the God which watches over the United States watches over the entire world. We can bomb to pieces but we cannot bomb the world to peace.

This is the time for us to try again to unite the world in our common aspiration for peace and for human unity.

AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from Afghanistan. I went there

to personally thank our troops and to speak directly with President Karzai and our generals to see how things are going. They told me that the U.S. and Afghan forces are working successfully side by side against the Taliban fighters and al Qaeda terrorists.

They are also working together to build roads, bridges, and schools to help change hearts and minds over the long term. As I rode down the streets of Kabul, I saw little boys and girls skipping on their way to school, carrying their American book bags. When the Taliban was in charge, there were no girls in school, and the country had an 80 percent illiteracy rate.

Now there are 6.7 million Afghan children in school. I met with several of the 68 women who were recently elected to Afghanistan's Parliament. They are excited about their new-found freedom and democracy. The Taliban are hoping that democracy in Afghanistan will fail so they can return to power. But the people there have tasted freedom and they like it.

URGING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR TAXPAYER DOLLARS

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, this Congress has cut and run from its responsibility of oversight, to ensure that the taxpayer money is spent wisely. By last count, nearly \$10 billion of the funds set aside for Iraq reconstruction cannot be found. Vanished. \$10 billion gone.

And now the Government Accountability Office reports that 16 percent of the aid distributed after Katrina, \$1.4 billion, was spent fraudulently. Some of the money went to pay for a bottle of Dom Perignon, Caribbean vacations, "Girls Gone Wild" videos.

That may be one heck of a vacation, but it is a horrendous use of the taxpayer dollars. Instead of rooting out incompetence and fraud and waste and abuse, the Congress has actually protected it. No oversight. No accountability.

By failing in their oversight responsibility, by failing to ask the tough questions and hold the administration accountable for their actions, the Republican Congress is a willing accomplice to the greatest taxpayer ripoff since the Teapot Dome. We just sent an additional \$94.5 billion to Iraq and the gulf coast without a single act of accountability or oversight. It is time for a change. It is time for a new direction.

FOCUS ON WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN IRAQ

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, democracy dealt terrorism another major blow last week with the defeat of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the mastermind behind countless brutal acts of terror.

This was a crucial victory for Iraq's new democracy, and major setback for the terrorists who seek to destroy that democracy.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the sacrifices our military has made to ensure our freedoms and our safety. They fought bravely and served honorably. That is why I cannot understand why some members of the press and some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle put a negative spin on our military's accomplishments.

These folks need to focus on the great progress we are making and stop listening to liberal newspaper editorial columns. Last week's silencing of al Qaeda's top leader in Iraq should silence their false views on the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close with a quote by an Army major serving his third tour in Iraq. "For every vividly portrayed suicide bombing, there are hundreds of thousands of people living quiet, if often uncertain, lives. For every depressing story of unrest and instability, there is an untold story of potential and hope. The impression of Iraq as an unfathomable quagmire is false and dangerously misleading."

RUBBER-STAMP CONGRESS

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I brought my rubber stamp to the floor today because I want to remind everyone that tomorrow you have got to bring your rubber stamps to endorse the President's proposal in Iraq.

The majority leader's plan is nothing more than let us do more of the same. Now, there is no plan from the White House. What they say, and listen to these words, when the Iraqis stand up we will stand down.

That gives the control to the clerics, from the Shia and the Sunni. When they stop the civil war, then we can come home. We have put our troops under the control of the Sunni and Shia clerics in Iraq. That is not supporting the troops.

We have to have a plan about when they come home. We will decide. We say there are 250,000 trained. And there are only 20,000 of those insurgents out there. How many do they have to train before they can handle 20,000 insurgents?

Well, the Iraqi clerics will tell us. Do not forget your rubber stamp tomorrow.

GUN CONTROL MYTHS

(Mr. McHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Speaker, the Washington Times reported last week that while firearms sales in the United States remained on the rise, gun-related crime and gun accidents are on the decline.